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CITY OF



JOLIET

150 WEST JEFFERSON STREET
JOLIET, ILLINOIS 60432-4158

May 6 , 2011

Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20423

RE: EJ&E/Woodruff Road Crossing Bypass

Dear Chairman Elliott:

I am pleased to inform the Surface Transportation Board that the City of Joliet and the Canadian National Railway have agreed to a new bypass road project that will eliminate the at-grade crossing that has consistently experienced the highest incidence of rail blockages of 10 minutes or more on the entire EJ&E system.

On April 18, 2011, the Joliet City Council authorized the execution of a Memorandum of Agreement whereby the railroad will provide the City up to \$2.5 million for the construction of a new bypass road that will permit Joliet to permanently close the Woodruff Road crossing. The proposed bypass road will redirect motorists northwesterly toward Collins Street (IL. Rt. 171), avoiding the crossing completely.

In accordance with our agreement, the railroad will soon provide the first installment of the funding it has committed, which will allow the City to hire an engineering consultant to design the road. Joliet has begun discussions with the land owner, the State of Illinois, on acquiring the necessary easements and right-of-way for the road. The project is expected to be completed in mid to late 2012.

This project is a perfect example of the benefits of a good working relationship with the railroad. CN is aware that Joliet is an active participant on the "Collins Street Task Force," a state and local initiative to redevelop the shuttered Joliet Prison property. One of the key components of that group's 2007 Action Plan was the construction of a new access road next to the railroad tracks, which would make the property more attractive for redevelopment. Unfortunately, until CN voluntarily stepped forward the participating units of government could not identify a funding source.

It is not very often that a single project can satisfy two major needs at the same time. The CN proposal does that, and Joliet appreciates their offer.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Thanas

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City Manager

TAT:JH:pt

cc: Vice Chairman Ann D. Begeman
Commissioner Francis P. Mulvey
Matthew T. Wallen, Director, Office of Public Assistance, Governmental Affairs & Compliance
Phillips Johnson-Ball, Deputy Director, Office of Environmental Analysis